

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-11 EURE-00 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1009

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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USLO PEKING

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USIA FOR IOP, IBS, IPS, IEU

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TAGS: PFOR UR US

SUBJECT: PRAVDA ON THE WORD "DETENTE" AND THE SECRETARY'S INTERVIEW

1. UNTIL TODAY, SOVIET COMMENT ON PRESIDENT'S REMARKS REGARDING DETENTE WAS LIMITED TO CONSTERNATION ON PART OF SOVIET JOURNALISTS AND OFFICIALS IN CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN (INCLUDING AMERICAN) NEWSMEN. SUCH COMMENT, WHICH FORMED BASIS OF SOME WESTERN PRESS STORIES, INCLUDE ALLEGATIONS THAT PRESIDENT HAD "ABANDONED PRINCIPLE" OF DETENTE, THAT U.S. POLICY WAS "RETURNING TO DULLES", AND THAT "ENEMIES OF DETENTE" WERE BEING ENCOURAGED. HOWEVER, NO SUCH COMMENTS WERE MADE TO U.S. OFFICIALS HERE, AND SOVIET MEDIA CULTIVATED CAREFUL SILENCE ON PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT.

2. THE SOVIET PRESS HAS NOW BROKEN ITS SILENCE ON THE PRESIDENT'S DISAVOWAL OF THE TERM "DETENTE", PARAPHRASING EXCERPTS FROM THE SECRETARY'S U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT INTERVIEW THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS "REFERRED TO THE TERM, AND NOT TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE POLICY".

3. A TASS ITEM CARRIED IN PRAVDA MARCH 10 AND, IN A SHORTENED VERSION, IN KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, REPORTS THAT "AS IS KNOWN, G. FORD, SPEAKING ON TELEVISION IN FLORIDA, STATED THAT THE USA SHOULD STRIVE TOWARD A LESSENING OF TENSION IN ORDER THAT IT CAN CONTINUE TO CONDUCT A POLICY OF PEACE BASED ON STRENGTH." TASS EXPLAINS THAT THE PRESIDENT DECIDED THAT THE FRENCH TERM WAS UNACCEPTABLE, AND THAT THERE WAS NO APPROPRIATE WORD IN ENGLISH. THE ITEM PARAPHRASES THE SECRETARY IN HIS INTERVIEW THAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT "DOES NOT INDICATE ANY CHANGE IN POLICY. THE WHITE HOUSE HAS STATED THIS WITH ALL CLARITY, AND I KNOW THAT IT IS SO".

4. TASS ALSO PARAPHRASES CAREFULLY SELECTED PORTIONS OF THE SECRETARY'S INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE DEFENDS A LESSENING OF TENSIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE ARTICLE APPROACHES A DIRECT QUOTE OF THE SECRETARY'S ENUMERATION OF THREE "BASIC REALITIES OF THE CONTEMPORARY PERIOD", NOTABLY OMITTING THE WORD "ROUGHLY" WHICH HE USED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUALIFY HIS ASSERTION THAT THE U.S. AND THE USSR "ARE POWERS OF ROUGHLY EQUAL STRENGTH". TASS CONTENTS THAT THE SECRETARY "ESPECIALLY EMPHASIZED THE NEED" TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON SALT.

5. TASS QUOTES THE SECRETARY DIRECTLY THAT U.S. POLICY "IS NOT BASED ON THE PROPOSITION THAT UNIVERSAL HARMONY HAS ARRIVED. WE RECOGNIZE THAT WE ARE DEALING

WITH AN IRRECONCILABLE IDEOLOGY." THOUGH IT CHARACTER-
ISTICALLY OMITTS PRECEDING SENTENCE THAT U.S. POLICY IS
NOT BASED ON TRUST OF THE SOVIETS AND FOLLOWING SENTENCE
THAT SOVIET EXPANSIONISM CAN BE STOPPED. IT ALSO PARA-
PHRASES RATHER CLOSELY THE SECRETARY'S ASSERTION ABOUT
THE INEVITABILITY OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR "WHAT THEY CALL
NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENTS", THOUGH OF COURSE
OMITTING THE WORDS "WHAT THEY CALL..." AS WELL AS HIS
FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE RISKS THEY MAY BE WILLING TO RUN TO
PROVIDE SUCH SUPPORT.

6. FINALLY, THE TASS ITEM ALSO ATTRIBUTES TO THE
SECRETARY THE DIRECT QUOTE THAT "SOME PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY
DURING AN ELECTION YEAR, SEE CERTAIN BENEFIT IN MAKING
ALL KINDS OF UNSUPPORTED ACCUSATIONS, AT THE SAME TIME
NOT EXPLAINING WHICH ALTERNATIVES THEY WOULD PREFER."
WE DO NOT FIND THIS PASSAGE IN THE TEXT OF THE INTER-
VIEW MADE AVAILABLE TO US IN THE WIRELESS FILE.

7. IN A SEPARATE SIGNED COMMENTARY IN PRAVDA ENTITLED
"DETENTE; REALITY AND NECESSITY", PROFESSOR AND DR.
OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES V. ANFILOV MAKES THE SAME POINTS
CARRIED IN THE CAREFULLY SELECTED TASS EXCERPTS OF THE
SECRETARY'S INTERVIEW, AGAIN PARAPHRASING RECENT STATE-
MENTS BY THE SECRETARY DEFENDING A LESSENING OF TENSION
WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND WARNING THAT ELECTORAL CONSI-
DERATIONS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INFLUENCE THIS POLICY.

8. COMMENT. THE SOVIETS CLEARLY WAITED TO COMMENT ON
THE PRESIDENT'S DISAVOWAL OF "DETENTE" UNTIL THEY HAD
PUBLIC REAFFIRMATION OF U.S. POLICY CONTINUITY IN HAND.
WHILE REMOVAL OF THE WORD "DETENTE" FROM OUR POLITICAL
VOCABULARY MAY DO AWAY WITH PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION IN
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ENGLISH, IT MAY CREATE THEM IN RUSSIAN. THE PRAVDA
TRANSLATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S PHRASE "PEACE THROUGH
STRENGTH" IS "MIR OPIRAYAS' NA SILU"-WHICH CAN JUST AS
EASILY BE TRANSLATED AS "PEACE THROUGH FORCE".
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